

M. D. Knight

THE VICAR OF ST. MARY'S,

NOTTINGHAM,

VERSUS

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

OF

ST. BARNABAS.

BY THE

REV. R. W. WILLSON.

PART I.

LONDON:

DOLMAN, NEW BOND-STREET; JONES, PATERNOSTER-ROW;
ANDREWS, DUKE-STREET, LITTLE BRITAIN.

NOTTINGHAM:

SUTTON, BRIDLESMITH-GATE; ROPER, GEORGE-STREET.

PRICE THREEPENCE.

1842.

A R E P L Y,

ETC.

THE Venerable G. Wilkins, vicar of the "Mother Church," has just given birth to a pamphlet of sixty-six pages,—sixty-six mortal pages of hot and fiery invective. What has made 'the vicar' so choleric? What new mare's nest has he found now? Whom has he now undertaken *charitably to chastise*? for in every similar outbreak, whilst he has scattered around him nicknames, vituperation, and insult, he tells his victims all the while, that he seeks nothing but their good, that he is so overflowing with the milk of kindness towards them, so charitable, gentle, and every thing that is Christian, that he would not for the world offend them;—not he,—though he still keeps rubbing their wounds, and straining every nerve to get one turn more out of the moral rack on which he has, in pure loving charity, stretched them. The Doctor evidently acts upon a system,—for every line of *professed charity*, so many pages of bitterness and acrid humour to blot it out; for this, in all his splendid tracts, charges, and pamphlets, is sure to be his

procedure, just as a gentle zephyr is the herald of the coming storm ; or the small hand's breadth of cloud harbingers the tempest. Be sure, therefore, when you read of charity, that the venom of his hatred is swelling ; and when he smiles in your face, and the more he does so, and tells you that he does not mean "to give expression to any unkind feeling towards you,"* that effect does not follow cause more closely and surely, than that declaration will be followed 'hot on the heel,' by every acrid and biting phrase and imputation, which an unscrupulous pen can trace, and which his heart tells him will be most keenly felt, because most hateful and unmerited.

Look back at his career through life ; at the contests in which he has been engaged ; at the defeats he has sustained ; at the language which he has used ; at the leprous distilment which he has poured out upon friends and foes ; on Dissenters and Churchmen ; on laity and clergy ; on the inhabitants of the town in which he lives ; on the parish which he calls 'his own ;' on individuals and public bodies ; and then judge of Dr. Wilkins. I speak not of things unknown, or known but to a few ; but of written and published invectives, which, I hesitate not to say, outrage decency, charity, and Christianity. Mr. Wm. Howitt he nicknamed a "*Deistical Quaker*,"† and characterized his works as "*anti-Christian, deistical, and revolutionary*,"‡ and then as a makeweight, of course, concludes an angry diatribe by offering up a prayer for him, that "*he might be brought to repentance*," and then signs himself "his well-wisher, George Wilkins." (?) §

Then there was the case of the Rev. Mr. Unwin—poor Unwin—has Dr. Wilkins forgotten his own letters, in the pamphlet which unfolded that unfortunate man's case ? But peace be to his ashes—and for the sake of the living, and his poor afflicted and

* Address, p. 4.

† Letter to W. Howitt, p. 10. ‡ Ibid, p. 2. § Ibid, p. 15.

widowed mother, we will not probe into this unhealed sore. And the Rev. Thomas Wilkinson, for forty-five years curate of Bramcote, can Archdeacon Wilkins think of him, and not blush for very shame? can he talk of charity and justice with this case ringing in the ears of the public, and pilloried as he was to the public, by the exposure of his own letters and conduct in the business? Has he forgotten the castigation inflicted upon him by Mr. Bruce Campbell? Has he forgotten the treatment which the respectable and highly respected churchwarden of Sneinton, Mr. Hopcraft, experienced from him? Does he think that all men have forgotten, that he denounced the churchwardens elected in opposition to the system of church-rates, as "*revolutionists and perjurers?*"* or that the Dissenters were stigmatized as "*hypocrites, or something worse?*"† their unwillingness to pay him money, as "*unreasonable and unchristian?*"‡ and their '*pretext*' of tenderness of conscience, a "*miserable piece of hypocrisy and deceit?*"§ Does he remember characterizing the householders of this very parish, when called upon to exercise the right given them by the law, of voting in vestry, as "SWARMS OF WRETCHES, CREATURES SCARCELY HUMAN, so *besotted* as to be ignorant of everything, save to raise the shout of clamour, at a preconcerted signal?"|| Does he recollect sneering at "*the Calvinistic founder of Methodism,*"¶ and describing John Wesley as repudiating baptism as "*without claim on our attention,*" and as inculcating that "the pains of hell and the tortures of the devil necessarily accompany the new birth;—tortures which the *fanatic* alone *feels*, and having undergone them, that he is *then and then only* to be pronounced regenerate?"*** And let him contrast this with his attempt at cajolery, when the Wesleyans' services were thought likely to be useful.

* Letter to Lord John Russell, p. 13.

† Ibid, p. 15. ‡ Ibid, p. 8. § Ibid, p. 9. || Ibid, p. 16.

¶ Voice from the Font, p. 67. ** Ibid. p. 67.

In 1839, he addressed a letter to this same body, offering to administer the communion to them, in the 'Mother Church,' and at an hour before his own flock attended the same church!

But this is not all, nor half, the Archdeacon's history of strife, arrogance, and insult. Look at the charity and courtesy received at his hands by members of his own body—by ministers of his own church—the *evangelical clergy*, as they are generally termed. Is there an association of theirs that he has not blackened, a peculiarity which he has not held up to scorn? Has he not termed their faith "*a new religion*,"* their practices as intended to bring into contempt the liturgy to which they have subscribed; and spoken of that clergy as "entertaining no more regard for the discipline of the Church, than barely to keep them within the limits of the *outward* church of which they profess themselves ministers?"† Did he not oppose them but yesterday, in their endeavours—their successful endeavours, to build a new church in this town? and now, when that church is built despite of him, does he not, with his usual duplicity, turn round and speak of that erection as "*an effort lately put forth by OUR BODY?*"‡ Has his last attack on that party, made in the very house of God, escaped his memory? or does he imagine that thinking men have already forgotten, that one of that body has branded him as advancing "*charges which have not the slightest foundation in truth; § as a calumniator, a forger of facts, || and a falsifier and garbler of extracts and evidence?*"¶ That "Charge" of the Archdeacon's so characterized, was as usual—but the result of "*duty*"—and was written, or rather read, in a spirit of amiable charity. "Believe me," says the Archdeacon, "My Reverend Brethren, the remarks I have made are offered in the *unfeigned spirit of con-*

* Voice from the Font, p. 19. † Ibid, p. 20. ‡ Address, p. 3.

§ Observations by the Rev. R. Simpson, p. 5.

|| p. 17.

¶ p. 16.

ciliation ; they have been called forth from no desire of causing pain, or conveying reproach, having no other feelings to gratify than those of an honest and sincere desire to discharge what I firmly believe to be a *duty*.* If he can forget these things, the public cannot, his friends cannot, his opponents will not. Do not these facts prove him to be a meddling arrogant, and restless man ; that every one that values his peace will sedulously avoid ; in language vituperative, in accusations unscrupulous, with charity on his lips, and the gall of bitterness flowing from his pen ; with his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him ?

Fœnum habet in cornu ; hunc tu Romane caveto.

But what ails the Archdeacon now, I would ask ? who, or what has moved his irritable bile to overflow and fill sixty-six pages ? I am now the object of the Vicar's kind solicitude and chastening love ; or rather not I, he will tell you, but the church which I am erecting. Of course the Vicar, as usual, is but discharging a solemn '*duty* ;† of course it is "*far from his intention to give expression to any unkindly feeling* ;"‡ of course he must lubricate his victim, like the serpent, before he proceeds to crush him to pieces.

But does Dr. Wilkins think I am to be caught, as he would rid himself of flies, with a little honey ? Does he remember designating me, in public print, "*a phrenzied agitator*," and characterizing me as a "*deceitful minister of the Romish Church* ?" And this man, this restless arrogant man, when he *dare* no longer insult me by such language, thinks that I am to be cajoled and hoodwinked into the belief of his loving kindness and amiable condescension, by a few soft words of praise thrust into a note.§ I am now "the respectable Roman Catholic priest stationed in

* Charge, p. 31, and Preface.

† Address, p. 4.

‡ Ibid, p. 6.

§ Ibid, p. 4.

this town, whose character for mildness of manner and charitable activity is admitted by all." The "*phrenzied agitator*" gives place to "*mildness of manner*," and the "*deceitful minister of the Romish Church*" is transformed into a "*respectable Roman Catholic priest of acknowledged charitable activity*." Cajoled, I repeat, for this term of praise is overlaid by sixty-six pages of attack on me individually, and of slanderous outrage on the religion which I teach. 'What a small pennyworth of bread for so much sack!' Yes, reader, twenty-three pages for the sole and avowed object of attack on the building on which I am engaged; grossly misrepresenting my object, mis-stating my motives, and insulting me, and every Catholic with me, by the foulest inventions as to the means by which the funds for building are created;—and forty-three pages of outrage on my religion, and that of the great majority of Christendom; or rather a vile caricature dressed up for the occasion, in which a phantom pageant, consisting of almost every article of Catholic faith, the Bible, the rule of faith, the canon of scripture, the pope, invocation of saints, relics, images, transubstantiation, the mass, the sacraments, pass before the eyes of the reader—shapeless, hideous spectres, disfigured, mangled, and distorted by the jugglery or dishonesty of Archdeacon Wilkins.

Not one of those doctrines, I most solemnly state, and shall prove my statement, but what is mis-stated; not one of those doctrines but what is so misrepresented by Dr. Wilkins, that were I to teach what he would palm on me, and on the public, as my faith, I should be guilty of palpable heresy in the sight of God and man. And this comedy of errors,—this farrago of ignorance and cunning presumption, or of malice and folly, I am to believe is the offspring of the Vicar's "*sense of duty*," and is "*no expression of unkind feeling*;" and I am, I suppose, to be very thankful for the Venerable Archdeacon's instructive

pamphlet and intended castigation. It is all *charity*—and *duty*—and *zeal* for my good! Out upon such sickening hypocrisy and cant!

Ad populum phaleras, ego te intus et in cute novi.

But enough, for the present, of the Vicar's pamphleteering tactics, amiable gentleness, and very charitable zeal. I will now turn to the pages before me. They divide themselves, as I have said, into two parts,—the first an attack on the church in the course of erection; and the second on the doctrines he professes to believe will be taught in that church. I will take each in turn; and first to the building.

A new church is being built, *without his leave*, and the Venerable the Archdeacon swells with insulted dignity. A new church is being built, too large by half, too grand by half; it will “surpass,” (at least he says so) “the Mother Church, St. Mary's, itself:”* and can Archdeacon Wilkins look on and smile? If it were for himself, or if there were a chance of seizing it, like St. Mary's, from those that built it, the Vicar might smile. But alas! “*that overstrained act of liberality and excessive toleration*, has thrown open the portals of the Romish Church to the reception of all.”† Nay there is not even the chance of punishing by fine and imprisonment the attendants at that church,‡ or of putting to death the priest who officiates.§ Such things were every day occurrences, for about one hundred and fifty years of the palmy days of the liberty of the gospel, as proclaimed by an act of Parliament, and enforced by Godly prelates, and right charitable churchmen; but these privileges have at length been gradually brought down to a few

* Address, p. 3.

† Ibid. p. 4.

‡ By the 23d Elizabeth. c. 1, every person above the age of sixteen not repairing to some usual place of common prayer, forfeited to the Queen, for every month, £20.

§ For a priest to come into, or be in any part of, this realm, was by the 27th Elizabeth, *death*, by hanging, drawing, and quartering.

paltry shillings, levied at distant and uncertain periods and places, on the poor, for presuming to absent themselves from the ministrations of the compeers of the Reverend Archdeacon. Seizure then being out of the question, persecution's sword being blunted, what remains for Dr. Wilkins, if he would show the ancient spirit of his race, but to use a more womanly weapon, his tongue, and revile at what he fain would, but cannot prevent?

But the Archdeacon proclaims it a "duty," on his part, to interfere; not merely "*a right, but a duty*," to denounce the building a new Catholic church as "*an attempt to interfere upon the field of his ministration*;" and as a design "*to draw away the flock authoritatively consigned to his care*."* If a duty, it is, of course, because God has commissioned him to superintend such matters. He is, if we will only believe him, a kind of divinely appointed architect, or comptroller-general of churches—all the societies for building churches, here in Nottingham at least, embodied, rolled as it were into one man, and that man Archdeacon Wilkins.

Be it so: I wish to respect so exalted a privilege; but I must ascertain its existence before I submit to it. Will Dr. Wilkins condescend to moderate his wrath awhile, and vouchsafe to state when and by whom this pre-eminence was conferred? Is every Catholic or Dissenter that chooses to project a building, as he thinks for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, to consult Archdeacon Wilkins, and to await his spiritual "*edificatur*?" Is it because he is an ordained clergyman that he assumes this supremacy? I will not take upon myself the difficult task of answering whether this plea will satisfy the Dissenter, and teach him better manners for the future, though it may be an argument of wondrous efficacy with Churchmen, especially when wielded by the doughty arm of our chivalrous and pugnacious Archdeacon. But against

me the weapon is perfectly harmless. If he be an ordained clergyman, so am I. Is it because he is episcopally ordained? so am I. What other claim he can advance, which does not equally, or more forcibly, attach to my office, as a Catholic priest, his predecessor in the "Mother Church of St. Mary's," when the Catholic religion was the national and only one, I know not. I cannot for the very life of me, discover why a descendant of those men who have crowned this our land with church and cathedral as with a diadem, should ask Archdeacon Wilkins's leave, when he wishes to walk, at however humble a distance, in their footsteps.

Yes, there *is* one plea to which I neither have, nor wish to have, a claim,—an act of Parliament! Not God's law, but man's law, gives Dr. Wilkins a pre-eminence here which I have not. Whatever privilege he claims as *ministerial and divine*, he cannot deny that I possess, on credentials equal at least to his own: but *the law* secures to him privileges which it withholds from me. By a *legal* technicality this parish is his:—and on this the Vicar falls back to scowl defiance and rage.

The State then, if we may believe the gentle Archdeacon, puts a measuring tape into his hands, and requires of him as a duty, in return for considerations received, that he see to it that all churches, save those of the Establishment, shall just, and no more than just, contain their respective congregations. The spirit of the Establishment then is this; that Dissenters and Catholics may, as an act of great condescension, be allowed to build for themselves places wherein to worship Almighty God, and no longer be compelled by pains and penalties to attend at the service of the Established Church, but on this indefeasible condition, that those buildings just accommodate their present numbers. To think of proportioning the building to any expected increase, whether by advancing population, immigration, conversions calculated on experience, or the recovery of some of

that numerous class who are destitute of religion, is to infringe on the rights of the beneficed clergy of the Church established by act of Parliament, and is not to be acquiesced in on their parts without solemn remonstrance and indignant protest. This is the Archdeacon's idea of toleration;—this his notion of religious liberty and the right of private judgment;—this his idea of his duty and of his rights!

But have I to remind the Venerable Archdeacon, that the State can portion out lands and parishes, but *not souls*. That it can extort tithes, and church rates,* and fines, but not consciences. That it can transfer from the *poor* to the *rich* the charitable donations and bequests of former days; void wills made for the benefit of the Catholic, and divert the money to the Protestant; but it cannot give away the *minds* of men, or make men Protestants against their will, or portions of the 'Established' flock without their consent. The State dispenses *money*, not *truth*. Let the Archdeacon remember that the same law which secures to him the church built by Catholic hands, and Catholic zeal, which retains him and his compeers, in most instances with Catholic money too, secures to me, and to all, the right to build when and where we please, without consulting Archdeacon Wilkins, though he be *the* Vicar, and an intruder into the "Mother Church of St. Mary's."

Be content, Dr. Wilkins, with what the law at present bestows: the tithes are yours; (I mean through the country generally) church-rates are yours, where they can be obtained; every ecclesiastical monument of the land is yours; the law has stripped the Catholic priest and the poor to clothe you with purple and fine linen; the universities, once Catholic, are yours; the accumulated charities of ages have been shamefully diverted from a thousand channels, to irrigate, like a

* In some places the church-rates have been refused by the determination of the people—so it was in the Vicar's parish, by *householders* who were insultingly termed by him, "wretches scarcely human!" See Letter to Lord John Russell.

Pactolus, in one golden stream, the Church which that law established; but presume not to stretch your arm beyond the point that the law will support it, or it is withered and powerless. You only expose yourself, your party, and your Church as imbecile, but malignant meddlers, that, gorged with State wealth, and State patronage, till blinded, cannot distinguish between what the State can give; and mark! can take away, and what is beyond its power to bestow; or its jurisdiction to transfer,—the liberty of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and of building temples to his honour, and for the salvation of man. Power abused is tyranny; power assumed, usurpation; and does Archdeacon Wilkins think these are the days, or this the place, for men to admit exploded and pragmatical pretensions, or to suffer such as he to lord it over the conscience? Are these the days for a spiritual dictatorship to be set up and tamely worshipped? He mistakes the times!

“Why he *would* bestride the *town* like a Colossus,
And we puny men peep under his huge legs,
To find ourselves dishonourable graves.”

But we shall build churches though we incur his formidable wrath, and what is worse, though we have to suffer the penalty of reading sixty-six pages of solemn nonsense, and antiquated slander. Law, reason, justice, and religion sanction our right, and approve its exercise, and with these to encourage us, we need not fear the fretful opposition of the Venerable and Reverend Doctor Wilkins. Let him do his duty, and enforce his rights, where those rights exist, but let us have no more pharisaical pretence of “*duty*” urging him to throw obstacles in the way of others rights and duty; or insolent interference in matters which he has no more right to meddle with, than the most uninterested person in the town.

But whilst I have stated to Dr. Wilkins that a legal technicality is the sole authority on which he

can call 'this parish his own,' and in what sense it is 'under his jurisdiction,' I would remind 'the Vicar,' in all the soberness and earnestness of truth, of the awful responsibilities which that claim imposes. Whether or not it is a mere act of insolent presumption to call the parish his; whether the assertion be true or false that it is "*authoritatively consigned to his care*;" I would remind him, that he makes himself responsible before God and man as having to give an account of the souls intrusted to his charge. I pass no judgment on the Vicar; I will not condemn him unheard, but I will place before him for serious consideration facts,—facts so fearful—facts so awful and mournful, that I would not produce them, could I see any doubt of their truth, or justification for their existence. But I can see neither. I allude to the poor, the sick and dying poor, in the union workhouse.

If there be one of God's creatures that needs the comfort and support of holy religion, it is 'these poor ones.' Earth for them has few, or no joys, and if their hopes are not raised heavenward, "*they are, indeed, of all men the most miserable.*" Poverty, not crime;—age and infirmity, not sin, have separated them from their homes, and doomed them to a hard, however it may be said to be an inevitable, thralldom. Then, if there be one spark of heavenly fire, in a man's or minister's bosom, it will surely brighten to a sacred flame at their sufferings;—it will be felt a sacred duty—a labour of Christianity and love, to visit them in their affliction. "*Religion pure and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their tribulation.*"*

I ask Dr. Wilkins,—I ask the public, whether there is, or can be, one duty of a minister, more urgent, or more awful than this? Any to which every other is not secondary and inferior? any the abandonment of which might not be tolerated in comparison with the neglect of this? And if these

* St. James, i. 27.

afflicted members of Christ's mystical body—these poor, and aged, and infirm, are dying, are known to be on the brink of a fearful eternity, oh! is it not then, if ever, that the minister of religion should redouble his efforts, think all things loss to gain such souls, and let *his* voice whom the flock knew, and *who claims to be their pastor*, be heard to cheer and direct them in their last momentous struggle. “*The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.*”*

Now, I ask Dr. Wilkins how often during the last year,—how often in the last half-dozen years, since he told Lord John Russell that he had ascertained that the majority of the persons in the union house were members of his Church, he has ministered in that abode of poverty and affliction? How often he has fulfilled his Lord's injunction “*to preach the gospel to the poor?*” How often he has visited the sick and the dying? Has he done this duty as the pastor of these souls which he publicly claimed, regularly, once a week—once a month—or even once a year? Can it be that not in one—one solitary instance, has his duty, or charity, or love for the poor led him here? Can there be truth in the statement put forth whilst I am engaged in this irksome task, by the ‘visiting guardians,’† “*that prayers are read by* VARIOUS GENTLEMEN, *but in consequence of the great duties the vicar of St. Mary's has to perform, he does not attend* TO PREACH AT THE HOUSE, OR VISIT THE SICK.” Gracious heaven! can there be *greater duties* than preaching to the poor, and visiting the sick, and comforting the dying? Have not these, in every age, been accounted “the

* Gospel of St. John, x. 11—13.

† See Nottingham Journal, Jan. 21, 1842.

works of mercy" above all others? The excuse is as evil as the neglect; this may be remedied, that shews utter and almost inconceivable ignorance of the first duties of a minister of Him, who made it one of the characteristics of His mission, that "*the poor had the gospel preached to them.*" But it is true, a rich and pampered clergy seldom or never were the friends of the poor, nor ever loved to visit them, and the dying. They could use the poor when living, but what use could the poor be to them when dying?

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

"Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

"Behold the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."*

But is it not possible that the Vicar may not consider them a portion of his flock? Read his own words, delivered at a late meeting of the guardians.† "I hope, as vicar of the parish, AND OF THOSE SOULS WHO ARE CONGREGATED WITHIN THIS HOUSE, to express my feelings. * * * And I say as vicar of the parish, and as having THOSE SOULS UNDER MY JURISDICTION, &c." The Vicar, then, clearly and indisputably knew these to be his flock; their souls were committed to his care, and knowing this, has he, as far as he is concerned, "suffered these souls to perish for which Christ died?"

How many of his own immediate congregation have been inmates of the workhouse, during the last six years, I know not; nor how many usual attendants at his ministrations have died there. But this I

* St. James, v. 1—5. † Nottingham Journal, Dec. 3, 1841.

know, from July 30th, 1836, to Jan. 19th, 1842, the number of deaths in that house has been FOUR HUNDRED AND SEVENTY.

Nor is this all. Though the vicar may, "in consequence of his great duties," have neglected this foremost duty, surely humanity, if not conscience, would see to it that the dying poor was not utterly destitute of ministerial counsel and assistance. Now will the Archdeacon have the goodness to inform the public, whether any clergyman of the Established Church has, I will not say been regularly in attendance on the sick and dying, in his stead, but has even once, in one solitary instance, whether as a matter of duty, or of charity, or zeal for the salvation of souls, at the call of conscience, or of humane feeling, visited a sick or dying person, to administer the rites of his religion, in this immense workhouse? I ask him, is it true that this work is totally neglected, or left to "VARIOUS GENTLEMEN," to read prayers, or do whatever else seems to them sufficient for the poor and the dying? If this be so, of what AVAIL IS HIS ORDINATION? where is the grace attached especially to his ministry as the successor of Christ's apostles?* Or is this too great a privilege to be partaken in by the poor, that they are to be turned over to the 'unauthorized,' and un-blessed, though truly charitable prayers of "various gentlemen?" If this be so, let the Archdeacon ponder seriously on the fate and conduct of a priesthood like to this, announced to them by the prophet Isaiah, chap. lvi. 9—12.

Dr. Wilkins had time to concoct sixty-six pages of slander and virulence, but he had no time to watch at the death bed of those *souls committed to his charge*. But *the Vicar* is not so much 'engaged with great duties' as not to attend the burials of the parish poor,

* There are some curious facts connected with the method of attending the sick, and the number of times the communion was given, during the time the parish employed a salaried chaplain.

and to receive the accustomed fees; and is it a more urgent work to bury the dead than to aid the dying? Well may the infidel and the sceptic laugh religion to scorn.

Oh! indeed it makes the soul sad, and the heart sick to hear these men, at one time boasting of theirs being the "*poor man's church*," and at another complaining that they have lost the affections of the poor;—denounce the poor as "*without religion*," "*wretches scarcely human*," and yet see them so awfully neglect these very poor; feeding upon them whilst living, and then leaving them to die like the very brute that perisheth. When Dr. Wilkins again says, "*this parish is mine, this flock is authoritatively consigned to my care*," will not the cry of the widow and the orphan, and the piteous moan of the death-stricken and forsaken, mingle the anguish of shame, and the remorse of neglected duty, with the pride and the arrogance which dictates the insult?

So much for the plea put forward by Dr. Wilkins, as justifying, nay necessitating him to launch a pamphlet of sixty-six pages against the church now in course of erection. That plea is the tempting but poisonous fruit of a forbidden tree;—a monster offspring of a factitious, hollow, and arrogant ascendancy, which when acting on a well-constituted and humble mind, can scarcely be borne with; but which when stirring the foul stagnations of an overweening and pompous vanity, is rank and disgusting, and makes its vain victim play most fantastic tricks,—the 'Sir Oracle' of his day, who 'when he speaks let no dog bark,'—and would be merely ridiculous, if history with its dear bought experience did not tell us, that it has overthrown dynasties, been the downfall of kingdoms, and has deluged the earth with human blood.

I will now place before the reader a few of the foolish assumptions and dictatorial and presumptuous judgments with which the Archdeacon has overloaded this part of his lucubration.

If we are to believe him, he is sure, ay, that he is, that not zeal for God's glory—nor any praiseworthy motive impelled me to build, but a mere paltry wish “to rival the efforts lately put forth by his body, in the erection of a new district church.”*

And for this petty and disreputable motive, which, if there be no real need of a second church, would defeat itself, I have incurred, he would have the public to believe, a responsibility to the amount of several thousand pounds; engaged in an undertaking, under any circumstances arduous, but in mine, and those of this humble mission, scarcely yet unencumbered from the debt of the first building, and surrounded with accumulated difficulties and anxieties, doubly so. Would the Archdeacon act thus? will any thinking person believe that a prudent man, nay, that a man not fatuous, would, for so wretched and paltry an end, incur so fearful a risk? My experience of the past, its difficulties and its trials, the debt incurred, and scarcely liquidated after a long lapse of years, would, the public may be assured, have prevented me from plunging into a similar sea of troubles, if, after mature reflection, necessity, and my duty to Almighty God, and my neighbour, had left me any method of escape.

The Archdeacon next utters a warning “against the attempts now made to *allure* you from your Church to the adoption of that superstition, and those errors, which, since the Reformation, *and until late years*, had obtained little hold upon the inhabitants of this part of the kingdom,”†

Superstition and errors! But, let that pass: of course whatever, and just what, we happen to approve, is quite holy and religious; whatever we reject, superstitious and erroneous. Vain man! “*who art thou that judgest another man's servant, to his own master must he stand or fall.*” Fortunately the Catholic religion, having had some few such tra-

* Address, p 3.

† Page 4.

ducers before, may possibly endure, though sneered at by Dr. Wilkins; it may, perhaps,—I cannot tell,—be, after all, not too presumptuous to doubt whether his ‘ipse dixit,’ his decision, will be accounted so infallibly certain as to preclude, henceforward, all hesitation in men’s minds as to our unscriptural and irrational character. But, if such really be the flagrant character of our Church, will Archdeacon Wilkins tell us *why he fears us?* why, even despite “his ministrations in the Mother Church for nearly a quarter of a century;”* why, though “Churchmen are awakening from their slumber” of twenty-five years under the pealing alarm of our spiritual ‘watchman,’ the Vicar,—though the “tide of Dissent begins to ebb;”† though a “current is running strongly in favour of the Church of England;”‡ though the “water which we minister in our churches, *such as it is, is impure, and the bread unwholesome;*”§ though “*our doctrine is not pure in its nature, nor spiritual and unalloyed* with the gross combination of TRICKERY and DECEIT, and is of no value, but an abomination in the sight of God;”|| though the hearer will be astounded to find that “*the Bible, in English, is used by such few Romanists alone, who have licence from their priests to read it;*” yet in our “churches and places of public worship the Bible read, is the LATIN VULGATE, AND NONE OTHER;”¶ will he tell us why, despite this unslumbering vigilance on his part for a quarter of a century—this diminishing drowsiness on the part of Churchmen—this favourable aspect of the times, and the accumulated incongruities, absurdities, superstitions and errors,—this absence of spirituality, and presence of TRICKERY AND DECEIT, and all the other abominations, so charitably and amiably assigned to us by the veracious Dr. Wilkins, there should be any need of his interference, any danger of his Bible-enlightened, and awakening flock “under the guidance and influence of the clergy,” being

* p. 4. † p. 8. ‡ Ibid. § p. 23. || Ibid. ¶ p. 24.

ALLURED,—that is the word,—“from a national Church, to a foreign one,—from the enjoyment of the glorious liberty of the one, to the slavery and chains of the other?”*

Are then foreign institutions, chains, and slavery, so alluring? or TRICKERY, DECEIT, AND SUPERSTITION,—the Doctor will remember these charming words,—so alluring? Foreign institutions! I had always thought that England was indebted, under Almighty God, to missionaries from the see of Rome, for its Christianity; that our archiepiscopal and episcopal sees, were, in the main, founded by that authority; that, omitting such political blessings as our Constitution, Magna Charta, trial by jury, and such matters, scarcely a parish or benefice exists, throughout the length and breadth of the land, which owes not its existence and its endowments to members of this Church, which he so flippantly and arrogantly maligns;—that if there be ennobling institutions in the land for learning and science, they were founded by Catholic munificence;—that whatever there is of solemn grandeur and magnificence in architecture, in abbey, cathedral, or church, was the offspring of Catholic science, Catholic charity, and zeal. But it seems that we have all hitherto been mistaken! This was all the work of Protestantism! The founders of these monuments, and the authors of these blessings believed the doctrines held by Dr. Wilkins, and were not in communion with the see of Rome. ‘Stupendous discovery! most wise and reverend Doctor! Thine is indeed a magician’s wand, that with one stroke, can illuminate a world; and thine to demolish with a sneer, a fabric of belief that had stood the shock of ages.

But, unfortunately, these are not the days for magic, and more unfortunately still, the Doctor, in days of yore, professed and subscribed to a very different opinion. He has heard, no doubt, of that pre-

cious book, the BOOK OF HOMILIES; he has heard too, possibly, of certain articles, mainly concocted by the ever-changing Cranmer, aided or overruled by that *foreigner* Calvin, and which articles are in number forty, save one; in the thirty-fifth of which we read as follows:—"The Second Book of Homilies, the several titles whereof we have joined under this article, doth contain GODLY AND WHOLESOME DOCTRINE, and necessary for these times, as doth the former Book of Homilies, which were set forth in the time of Edward the Sixth; and therefore we judge them to be read in churches, by the ministers, diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood by the people." Now it so happens that this well-thumbed sermon-book of the veracious Jewell, proclaims that, (reader, pray mark every word) "Laity and clergy, learned and unlearned, all ages, sects, and degrees of men, women, and children of *whole Christendom*—an horrible thing to think—have been at once drowned in abominable idolatry; of all other vices most detested of God, and most damnable to man; and that by the space of *eight hundred years or more*."—*Book of Homilies—Peril of Idolatry*. There then, for 'eight hundred years and more' before the Reformation, *there was not a single Protestant in the world*,—these eight hundred years are as comfortable a time as one could wish a Church to sleep;—the sleepiness of Protestants in Nottingham is nothing to this sleep of 'eight hundred years and more';—and by the way, these 'eight hundred years and more,' are rather a break in the links of Protestant apostolical succession, and a formidable invisibility in the perpetual and visible existence of their Church;—but, be this as it may, whatever was done, taught, built and endowed during "eight hundred years and more," this is quite clear, was the work of "damnable idolators"—meaning us Catholics,—whose religion Dr. Wilkins declares is so incurably a foreign one, and so unnatural, that "*eight hundred years and more*" could not domesticate nor naturalize it amongst

us. Lay it down then as an incontrovertible axiom that, for eight hundred years, Englishmen were not Englishmen, but aliens in their religion; Englishmen in their houses, but foreigners at church and at their private devotions, for so sayeth Dr. Wilkins. Incomparable historian—profound scholar—most penetrating and most consistent reasoner! To a man who can strike such welling waters from the barren rock of history, what difficulty can it be to open and read the human heart. *Motives* are to him tangible as *actions*. He will explain to you “the real, though *unarrowed* object which the Romanists have in view in erecting this immense edifice, and numerous other places of worship in the kingdom, even where there are *no* congregations, or not more than a *few* (*congregations* I presume) to frequent them.”* He will tell you “why they have eagerly caught at the aid which the *pretended* or *real* grievances of the Dissenters afforded, of combining with them in their warfare against the Established Church.”† All this, and more, will Dr. Wilkins unravel. His enemies are caught in their own snares; their plots are revealed to him; and all will be made known.

At all events, Dr. Wilkins bestows five pages on these important matters, these prophetic revelations. The only objection to which, besides their heaviness, is the trifling misfortune that we, all the while, are utterly unconscious of the profound foresight of this wonderful adaptation of means to ends, and are astonished, like ‘Moliere’s ‘*Medecin malgre lui*,’ or the student that wondered that he talked prose, to find ourselves so marvelously astute and sagacious, unknown to ourselves, so superhumanly wise as to build churches “*where there are no congregations* :” so generous as to rear vast and expensive edifices in the mere “fond hope that extensive and numerous communions (*congregations?*) will, at no distant time, be brought over to them from, what they call, their

* Address, p. 7.

† Ibid, p. 8.

(? an) apostacy ;”* or for the more profound purpose still of enabling all men, as in duty bound, to worship in our churches, “seeing that,” according to Dr. Wilkins, “we reckon every Christian to be of necessity a member of our Church only.”† With the Reverend Doctor’s permission, we will leave such wisdom and humble pretensions to him, who is “*the vicar*,” whose “*parish this is* ;” whose flock is the whole neighbourhood “*authoritatively consigned to his care*,” and to build a church in which is to obtrude between the wind and his nobility.

From motives, we will pass on with the Doctor, to the sinews of this architectural war,—the means, the funds. And here, reader, admire with me again, the sagacity of our lynx-eyed Vicar. *We* thought that unwearied effort and much privation on the part of our clergy, aided by untired zeal and charity, according to their ability, on the part of the laity, were the simple and only means of our success. We knew that we could not build our churches with money wrung from the unwilling hands of men who never used our ministry ; nor look for grants of public money ; or even the remission of public taxes in favour of the materials employed by us in building ;—these means we knew had been enjoyed by a favoured few, and without these helps, we were acquainted with no source from which to supply our wants, but zeal and charity.

But, alas ! for our blindness. The Archdeacon’s wand has created for us a boundless treasury, and piles on piles of gold : a fairy palace, “*a treasury invisible to all but the priesthood*.”‡ Invisible indeed ! and yet this clever Archdeacon detected it. To him the invisible becomes visible ! What a treasure we had, had we but known it, in this Archdeacon, when for years we struggled under the pressure of heavy debt.

O fortunatos nimium sua si bona norint !

* Address, p. 11. † Ibid, p. 11. ‡ Ibid, p. 12.

And this treasure is "*mitigations and indulgences*."* Mitigations and indulgences,—these are the sources of our vast wealth: this is the Venerable Dr. Wilkins' gold-country. O! wise Archdeacon, pray let me thank you. But shall such sagacity go unrewarded? Forbid it, justice. I, for one, will gladly place whatever flows into my "*invisible treasury*" into the Archdeacon's hands, for better or worse—for richer or poorer—till death us do part, for the small consideration of one week's proceeds from "the Mother Church of St. Mary's." 'We'll have the bond, and nothing but the bond.'

But I am sure the reader must be anxious to know what these "*mitigations and indulgences*" are, which are so eagerly sought after, and so highly valued, that, even in these days when "charity has grown cold," they are a mine more valuable than all the wealth of Ormus or of Inde. Dr. Wilkins shall tell him; for if he cannot, who can? Who, indeed! Not I certainly, for to me it is a most astounding discovery in theology and priestcraft—a scheme for extracting gold from moonshine could not come upon me more unexpectedly, but, I hope, not so unprofitably. Let us then hear the Reverend Vicar. "Their adherents *are taught by the priesthood* that contributions of money towards this object *may purchase* for their *bodies* here, and souls hereafter, mitigation of punishment for the sins they have committed, and that such mitigations or indulgences *will be in proportion* to the extent of their bounty."†

Reader, what a glorious privilege this! Oh ye to the waters! who will not drink at this well-spring? Before you is a nicely graduated scale; for so much money, so much punishment less. If you would spare *your bodies here, and souls hereafter*, spare not your purses now. A very Moses in the desert is this Dr. Wilkins; at his command, the hard rock giving forth

* Address, p. 12.

† Ibid, p. 12.

its living streams. Alchemy is no longer a dream, for he has found gold in sins; bank-notes in punishments; money in everything.

But alas! whilst I rejoice in this splendid and unlooked for treasure, I have, I fear, deep cause for regret, in having so long neglected my duty, as never, up to this very hour, to have taught my flock that contributions of money *will purchase* such signal blessings. What a loss to me,—but oh! what a mournful loss to my congregation. This may, indeed, prove my disinterestedness, and is some trifling comfort in my affliction, but does it not, at the same time, prove me ignorant of that religion which I have been employed nearly twenty years in teaching? How humiliating to reflect how much better Dr. Wilkins would have discharged *this duty*. *He* could not have been ignorant in a matter like *this*, in which his flock had so solemn an interest—an interest almost equal to his own. Not that the mere paltry pecuniary advantage would have sharpened our Vicar's intellect; for is he not far, far above the suspicion of seeking for pelf? Who has ever dared to do him the injustice to suspect that his has ever been one of those '*itching palms*,' that has clutched wealth from churches where those hands did not minister?*

* This, upon reflection, may not be *quite* past all controversy. The self-denying Archdeacon, may, after all, have been a sharer in that '*damning sin*' pluralities. There is some reason for believing that he once held something like six livings at the same time, from which he did part involuntarily. And besides this awkward subdivision of one person into six, I have before me a somewhat curious memorial for a disinterested '*MAN OF GOD*,' (See *Voice from the Font*, p. 99.) addressed by a Rev. Dr. Wilkins, Prebendary of Southwell, and Archdeacon of Nottingham, to "His Majesty's Commissioners appointed to consider the State of the Established Church, with reference to Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues," in which, after sundry curious particulars, an Archdeacon humbly and most disinterestedly suggests that the revenues of *all lapsed prebendal stalls shall flow into his purse*;—a suggestion of so apostolical and unselfish a character, that we deem it worthy

And yet, despite even *the* Vicar's declaration, a doubt *will* arise whether if the doctrine were preached by me it would be accounted Catholic. And then, though his authority may have due weight with me, it would scarcely do to quote it against gainsayers, if such there should be. He promises indeed, to GIVE SOLID AND SUBSTANTIAL PROOFS for every such statement,* but he has unfortunately omitted, *forgotten no doubt*, to fulfil his promise in this instance.

But I have it: if a doctrine of our Church, as *the* Vicar assures us, it must be registered in the CANONS AND DECREES OF OUR GENERAL COUNCILS, OR IN THE PUBLIC CREEDS; for these it is well known, are the sole records of those articles of faith and terms of communion, which, in various ages, have been propounded by the Church, as universally and for ever—*quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus*, held has truths revealed by Jesus Christ, and taught by his blessed apostles. The harvest to be reaped will repay the labour. But alas! neither council, nor creed, nor even catechism proclaims this tenet. Nay, I find that to sell these things is denounced as rank and flagrant simony—a crime which all who know anything of canon law, will sedulously beware. To offer money on those terms, as a purchase, we are therein taught, would

of being, in every way, preserved as a precious lesson to posterity, and shall therefore subjoin it:—

“Your memorialist conceives the object of your honourable board, while it makes provision for the superintendence and adequate performance of choral and parochial duties of the church, to be also for the MAINTENANCE OF THE OFFICE AND STATION OF THE ARCHDEACON OF NOTTINGHAM, BEGS FURTHER TO SUBMIT, THAT, UNTIL THE CONTEMPLATED ARRANGEMENTS COME INTO OPERATION, EACH STALL, AS IT BECOMES VACANT, WITH ITS REVENUES AND TURN OF RESIDENCE, SHALL DEVOLVE ON THE ARCHDEACON, UNTIL HIS INCOME SHALL REACH THE AMOUNT WHICH IS CONTEMPLATED FOR HIM AS ARCHDEACON; AND THAT ANY RESIDENCE KEPT BY HIM AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR ANOTHER PREBENDARY, BE DEEMED AND TAKEN AS RESIDENCE UPON HIS BENEFICE.”

* Address. p. 7.

be a crime or a folly, or both; to receive it would be worse than Simon's sin, of which the Apostle said: "*Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that THE GIFT may be purchased with money.*"* To teach this, then, as the doctrine of the Church, would be sheer *heresy*. "We know of no such custom, nor the Church of God," is our reply to Dr. Wilkins. We tell him that he slanders the Church; that he insults common sense and common honesty, by such a foul and monstrous statement; we defy him to produce council, or creed, or catechism of ours, in which the infamy which he unblushingly imputes, is taught, nay is not, if named at all, reprobated; and without using stronger language, which the insult might well justify, we leave him to his own heart to upbraid him; and to his own flock to require of him, as an act of justice to himself and to them, to produce his vouchers, if he can, from any authoritative exposition of our faith, for this vile calumny, which imputes to us, I repeat, doctrines which we do not merely not hold, but practices which the *Church* has in every age, unsparingly anathematized. The Vicar *surely* need not be told, that charitable and voluntary gifts are not *purchases*; nay that fees are not purchases,† though in the matter of indulgences, they may be obtained without money and without price. Corrupt men have, indeed, perhaps in every age, made a traffic of religion;—benefices, church preferment, almost everything sacred has been at times bartered for money, by some Judas who carried the purse, and made godliness gain,—for which they must suffer, but thank God, these deeds have ever met with us condemnation; every method has been used to put them down when grown rampant, and such things are now utterly unknown amongst us. It will be well if the Archdeacon can say the same of practices in

* Acts, viii., 20.

† For a defence of fees, see Dr. Wilkins's Letter to William Howitt, p. 6.

his Church. Mark, reader, I say *in*, not *of* his Church. That Church, I believe, condemns them, and I would not knowingly be guilty of this vile disingenuousness, which would ascribe as *principles* and *doctrines* of a Church, the vices of its members. I tell Dr. Wilkins, that every Catholic knows, and is taught from his infancy, that "*if he should distribute all his goods to feed the poor, or should deliver his body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth him nothing.*"—1 Cor. xiii. 3.

There is one, and only one more subject mooted in this part of the Vicar's veracious pamphlet, which remains to be noticed. Having blackened our MOTIVES in building, and suggested only such MEANS of defraying the expense as it would be a crime to employ, he next explains by what means, and by whom, the intended building is to be filled. These means, gathered from much verbiage, may be reduced to two—positive *compulsion* and *sensual allurements*—and these to be brought to bear upon the flock "authoritatively consigned to his care."

Now first as to the '*compulsion*.' "An act of liberality and excessive toleration, has thrown open the portals of the Romish Church to the *reception of all* whom its priesthood would COMPEL to enter them."* So then it seems that all my life, without knowing it, I have been *compelling* and driving his flock into my Church! The Archdeacon's *flock* are then not figuratively, but literally *sheep*, hunted down and worried on every side, and driven in spite of themselves, into my ecclesiastical sheepfold. What a miserable lot is theirs! Their own minister, the Archdeacon, if they approach him, will tell them that "*the great majority of them are indifferent to religion*;"† that when they do enter the Mother Church, to bring, for instance, their children to the font for baptism, the only comfort the Archdeacon has "*on these occasions is to observe the idle, the irreligious, and*

* Address, p. 4.

† Voice from the Font, p. 1.

*the ignorant staring in all the awkwardness of their WILFUL simplicity, feeling themselves justly accused of supineness and neglect, but without the least sense or desire of understanding and retrieving their error ;”** or if they come on a more mournful duty, for the burial of a beloved parent, brother, or friend, what consolation can it bring to them in their affliction, to hear the Archdeacon, their vicar and pastor, thank God, “who of his great mercy has taken unto himself the soul of the dear brother here departed,” when they reflect, that the departed probably formed one of those whom the Vicar had openly denounced as “*swarms of wretches scarcely human—as besotted, &c.*” Whilst thus branded by the Protestant Archdeacon, and driven by the Catholic priest, who must not pity their condition. They are not merely ‘*wretches*,’ but they are wretches and slaves without a will of their own, chained to the oar to pull the vessel of St. Peter, and to tug for their lives to steer the small bark of the Vicar. The Protestant Vicar grossly vilifies them, the Catholic priest ‘*compels*’ them ; then, alas ! what a priest-ridden, and parson-ridden people they must be.

That the religion by law established can *compel* by fine or imprisonment attendance at church, I am aware ; that for it schools, by a ludicrous misnomer called ‘*national*,’ are built out of public money, at which all who attend are *compelled* to frequent the Church of a sect, I know ; that thousands and millions can be *compelled* to pay for ministers whom they never hear, and for churches which they never enter, is no secret ; that the dead are, in most cases, *compelled* to be brought for burial by a clergy whom, when living, they did not recognize, is a well known fact ; that, until lately, parties contracting marriage, were *compelled* to be united by, and to pay, the ministers of a section, was a nuisance, now, happily, partially abated ; but that these, or any such powers were vested in the Catholic priesthood, I was utterly

* Voice from the Font, p. 13.

unconscious. I thought that these powers and rights had all been transferred to the ministers of the Protestant Church, but it seems I was mistaken; for we have still, according to the Archdeacon, one power left us,—the enviable privilege of being able “to *compel*” all to enter our Churches.

But, before presuming to exert this power, I should be glad to see my authority established, even by the Vicar’s credentials, an act of Parliament; and shall await, with all respect due to such authority, his “substantial and solid proofs” before leaving the even tenor of my way, to exercise a tyranny which, however sanctioned by law, I should from my heart abhor to wield. Till then, I shall look on the assertion as a mere figment and slander engendered in the Vicar’s prolific imagination, and leave every man to the unfettered liberty of worshipping God according to his own conscience; a right which I claim for myself.

I can only account for the Archdeacon’s hallucination by supposing that he has been turning over, in his “Golgotha” * certain *Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical*, by which all “*impugners of the King’s supremacy*,” are *excommunicated*; all teaching that “*the thirty-nine articles* are such that they may not with a good conscience subscribe thereunto;” or that “*the rites and ceremonies* used in the Established Church may with any good conscience, be disapproved of,” are likewise *excommunicated*; all impugners of the *government and hierarchy* of that Church, or of the form of *ordaining* the clergy; all *DISSENTERS* from the church, or *fautors of a religious system not that of the Establishment*, are equally put under the ban of *excommunication*: nay, the very affirming even that “there are within this realm *assemblies* other than those of the Establishment, which may rightly challenge to themselves *the name of true Gospel Churches*,” is even matter for *excommunica-*

* The Rev. Archdeacon, in the ‘*Voice from the Font*,’ p. 99, informs the public that this is the name by which he has christened his Library.

tion, and, as in the previous instances of disobedience to the Church by law established, all such persons “ARE TO BE RESTORED BUT BY THE ARCHBISHOP, AFTER THEIR REPENTANCE AND PUBLIC REVOCATION OF SUCH THEIR WICKED ERRORS.”*

If these were the regulations of our Church, the Vicar, might, perhaps, with reason, talk of *compulsion* ; but as these happen to be the mild corrections of his own liberal and tolerant Church, I leave him to reconcile them with that liberty of conscience which the so-called Reformers claimed for themselves, but took especial care, also, most stringently to limit to themselves.

The Archdeacon, I repeat, stated a fact, but mistook the application, when he asserted, that “they reckon every Christian of necessity a member of their Church *only*, out of the pale of which there is no salvation ; and such, as by the free and lawful exercise of their conscience and reason, presume to think and act for themselves, are esteemed heretics and apostates.”† This description, if there be any truth at all in it, can only delineate the Established Church ; for if a man may neither condemn the doctrines, discipline, liturgy, or hierarchy of that Church ; nor dare to *separate* himself from it, or to call any other than that Church, a true lawful and gospel Church, under the PENALTY OF EXCOMMUNICATION,—a not merely spiritual censure, be it remarked, as witness our Ecclesiastical courts,—why, is not all right of private judgment denied, all liberty of conscience destroyed, and every such offender convicted by this mild and tolerant Church as a *schismatic*, a *heretic*, or worse ?

I have given Dr. Wilkins “*solid and substantial reasons*” for retorting this impeachment on himself and his sect ; but, should he wish for further evidence, I will open to him the blood-stained pages of history ;

* Canons and Constitutions Ecclesiastical, from 1 to 12.

† Address, p. 11.

I will exhibit to him the reeking mysteries of that charnel-vault the Star-chamber, with its packs of blood hounds under the name of ‘PURSUIVANTS,’ and its household inquisition; I will place before him, one by one, the scourge—the rack*—and the fearful refinements of torture† with which, in her days of rampant ascendancy his Church armed herself to the wringing of many a breast, and the murder of thousands of innocent victims. Let Dr. Wilkins talk no more of “*penal punishment*,” or he shall be made to know that, in this country at least, *for three years* of barbarity under Mary—who after all, but put in practice the very lessons which the Reformers, Cranmer, Latimer, and Co. had taught her, and made her personally feel,—the men of his persuasion took a bloody and fearful revenge, *for more than one hundred years*. Bury, if you are wise, these sad remembrances; disturb not the bones of the dead,—Mr. Archdeacon, name not ‘*penal punishment*,’ lest the martyred victims of a persecution not surpassed, if even equalled, in atrocity and endurance by the worst deeds of the ruthless Pagans, should start from their cerements, as ghastly witnesses against you.

And I tell Dr. Wilkins that he does not merely not state our doctrines, but grossly misrepresents them when he has the audacity to assert, that we believe “every Christian of necessity to be a member of our Church *only*; or that out of the pale of our

* So horribly frequent was the use of the rack, under Elizabeth—for “the rack,” says Hallam, Constitutional History, i—200, “seldom stood idle in the Tower for all the latter part of Elizabeth’s reign,” that Burleigh was put on his defence before the nation, “and his vindication mainly consisted in alleging that Campion (a Catholic priest) was *tortured so mildly* as to be able soon after to walk and sign his confession. The genius of Elizabeth, and of the age, is exhibited by a single trait, and a fearful glimpse, is this association of the rack with mildness.”—*Mackintosh, History of England*, iii. 287.

† For a description of the instruments of torture, see Jardine’s work on the Use of the Torture.

Church there is no salvation. Were a Catholic to assert this to be an article of our faith, and this belief a necessary term of communion, I tell the Vicar, such a man would be in gross error, and if *wilfully obstinate* in that error, a self-condemned *heretic*. We account no one a heretic who does not *wilfully and obstinately* impugn the truth; whatever may be his error, as long as he conscientiously and invincibly maintains it, he is neither heretic nor apostate, to whatever communion he may belong, or whatever opinions he may defend. Let the Vicar produce any *canon* or *decree*,—mark the words—of our General Councils, and declarations of our *public creeds*,—for to these alone have I subscribed as a Catholic,—which substantiates his statement and refutes mine, and it will then be for him to denounce, and for me to submit to his reproaches.

So much for *compulsion*, now for his ‘ALLUREMENTS.’ “Attempts are now made (says Archdeacon Wilkins)* to allure you from your Church to the adoption of superstition and errors.” And in what do you think these ‘*allurements*’ consist? In sharing in an arrogant ascendancy? in attending at churches for which others pay? In having your children educated at others expense? Not in this, nor in any thing like to this, but simply in that we endeavour to replace, as far as in us lies, those magnificent edifices of which we have been deprived, and that we conduct our public worship with such solemnity, decency, and symbolic ceremonial as our reduced means will enable us to compass. This is the head and front of our offending. “*To catch and please the eye* is the first object of the Romanists, both within and without their sacred edifices; *to gratify the ear* the second.”† In opposition to the above assertions, hear what this same consistent gentleman stated in his sermon, December 9, 1836, “Let us not fail to GIVE HONOUR to *whom* HONOUR

* Address, p. 4.

† Ibid.

is due ; for it must be remembered to *their* credit, that our Roman Catholic forefathers reared this and other stupendous temples throughout the land, in which we worship, in a manner worthy of the same great God whom we both serve.”* Comment from me on those flagrant and dishonest contradictions would be trifling with my reader, this is but another sample of this man’s mind—he blows hot and cold with the same mouth.

If then the erection of churches of ‘fine proportion,’ correct style of architecture, and adorned with works of art, be *now* displeasing to the Venerable Arch-deacon, then of course he would have us build our churches to offend the eye, and to sin against taste ; this would be in his eyes a virtue at the present day. To act otherwise is “*apt* to throw the mind off its guard, while the soul, wrought upon by the impressions thus created, if it be not awakened from the mystic charm, will be taken captive.”†

Reader, this will account for the monstrous abortions produced by the Establishment under the name of churches ;‡ this will account for the style and taste displayed in the church of St. Paul, opposite the room in which I am now writing, erected by this reverend gentleman, in 1821, and that too, be it remembered, out of public money ;§ these incongruous and misshapen structures literally disgrace our land, while they impoverish it. Hitherto we thought this might arise from a vitiated taste, engendered by that fierce hatred of ancient and glorious architecture, painting, and sculpture, which was one disgrace of

* See Nottingham Journal, Dec. 16, 1836.

† Address, p. 23,

‡ For a very able and interesting article on modern churches, see British Critic, for Oct. 1840, written by a church clergyman.

§ There are some curious facts connected with the building of this church ; time, however will not permit me to mention them now.

the Reformation, and which hatred is but half dead ; aided by the chilling and formal nature of the services now performed within those edifices. This may account for the decay into which those monuments, which escaped those vandal spoilers called Reformers, are gradually falling, seconded perhaps by that worldly and selfish spirit which that event created,—a spirit cold as the grave, with scarcely life enough within it to guard these edifices from ruin, which Catholic piety and zeal built, decorated, and endowed ; and which, if the law that took away would but restore them, would soon be seen in all their pristine majesty and beauty. The Venerable Archdeacon accounts for this : it is all the while a deeply-laid plan and design, for fear lest ‘*the senses*’ should be taken captive “by beauty and melody,”* though we ordinary mortals had laid it to the score of decayed taste, exanimate zeal, and palsied charity.

Nothing of this kind, however, was feared under the carnal Jews ; they were thought to act in accordance with the divine will, in erecting a gorgeous temple, and in lavishing their wealth in its adornment ; there was every *allurement* that ‘*beauty and melody*’ could minister, and this without reproach from priest or prophet, nay with the direct approval of heaven. Here was no peril of feeding a naturally carnal heart, or of “enchanting the senses by any mystic charm.” But now all this is fraught with imminent danger, and creates a spell so powerful that its influence for evil is irresistible. “*O senseless Galatians,*” we may exclaim with the apostle, “who hath *bewitched you* ?”† And the answer is, architectural *beauty* and the *melody* of sweet sounds. He that hath music in his ear, or an eye for harmonious structure, is a doomed man ; and he must be infallibly deluded and drugged with the philters of error and superstition : he is entangled in toils past all escape ;

* Address, p. 23.

† Galatians iii. 1.

like the fated vessel within the fabled embrace of the whirlpool, he has destruction before him, but has not the power to escape its narrowing circles. What with the fumes of incense, the pealing organ, "gorgeous colours, deep religious gloom, and ceremonies gaudy and attractive,"* his faith will ooze out at every pore, and he must needs fall down and '*worship* the sainted image,† 'and venerated relic.‡ Beware then, ye enlightened flock of Archdeacon Wilkins, lest, without knowing it, all at once, as by a '*charm*,' ye become *adorers* of stocks and stones, and '*dead men's bones*,§ and worshippers of the GODDESS VIRGIN !||

Such is *the* Vicar's caution, and it will not be his fault if you are contaminated by evil company. But I used to think that, to the best of their means and ability, the members of the Establishment sought for architectural grandeur in their buildings, and did not deem rich embellishment a sin. I never heard that the cathedrals and churches of this land were deserving of condemnation in proportion to their beauty and magnificence ; and had a faint impression that solemnity and pomp of religious worship were not beneath their notice, or undeserving commendation in those 'long drawn aisles.' I thought that solemn music, with such appliances, were not accounted mere papal abominations. I really fancied, but I must have been mistaken, yet I fancied that I had read an earnest desire "to throw open to the sight, at one view, all the manifold beauties of the Mother Church of St. Mary;"¶ of an appeal for money to a noble lord, urged in language like the following:—"You, my lord, and those of your noble line, are not ignorant of the HOLY INFLUENCE which the OUTWARD BEAUTY of the house of prayer *is calculated to shed upon the heart*. There are sufficient proofs to put it beyond question."**

* Address, p. 23. † Ibid, p. 31. ‡ Ibid, p. 33. § Ibid, p. 34.

|| Ibid, p. 36.

¶ Voice from the Font, p. 4.

** Letter to Lord John Russell, p. 10.

And if '*outward beauty*' have this *hallowing* effect on the hearts of Protestants, why should it have a contrary influence on the minds of Catholics? But then, the reader will say, the above is not, cannot be, the opinion of Dr. Wilkins: this with him is a mere '*mystic charm*,' a carnal worship, a captivity under the enthralling senses. But yes, these *are* the Archdeacon's words; this his language; this his desire; this his argument, when seeking money for himself, and his purposes; but, of course, the matter is widely different when Catholics are concerned, or others than orthodox Churchmen. This may prove the Archdeacon inconsistent in argument, but right truly consistent in hateful bigotry, slander, and intolerance.

But no, he has not even this poor plea. It is to Protestants and not to Catholics that his warning is addressed. Protestants on whom he proclaimed these beauties to have a hallowing influence; it is to them his caution is directed, and surely they are not to be charmed by the charmer, 'let him charm ever so wisely.' He professes to caution the flock of which he has authoritatively received a spiritual *consignment* against being *allured* by *outward* beauty and internal embellishment, forgetful all the time that he himself sought for these very barren pastures for that very flock, even at the risk of "creating an excitement which a year's labour of the Dissenting ministers could not countervail."* Verily what a sagacious and consistent man is this Dr. Wilkins.

There remains yet a further task; to examine the doctrines which he asserts will be taught in that structure. A not laborious task in itself, but rendered laborious from the pile of misrepresentation, the Pelion piled on Ossa,—with which he has loaded every subject—every subject without exception; to take up each particle of which would be an endless task, but of which the '*weightier matters*' may, by being thrown together in masses, under distinct heads,

* Letter to Lord John Russell, p. 16.

be so placed before the reader, that he may be able to form for himself as accurate an estimate of the Vicar's honesty or fraud, ignorance or knowledge, as a theologian, as he has shaped for himself of his toleration as a Christian, or truthfulness and candour as a man.

